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Contact: Mary Apple, 406-896-5258

Secretary Norton Announces Appointments to BLM Resource Advisory Councils

Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced today the appointment of 17 members to Montana's three citizen-based Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) that advise the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on public land issues.

"We value the concerns and input that the Montana Resource Advisory Councils provide in helping us to manage our public lands," Norton said. "I welcome our new members and look forward to their commitment, expertise, and counsel as we work to improve the health of our public lands."

Composed of citizens chosen for their expertise in natural resource issues, the BLM's 24 RACs help improve the health and productivity of public lands across the West. Each RAC provides counsel and advice on public lands planning and management within the RAC's jurisdictional boundary.

"RAC members bring diverse backgrounds and a wide range of perspectives to each of our councils," said BLM Director Kathleen Clarke. "This diversity results in a balanced outlook that helps the BLM carry out its multiple-use mission in Montana."

Montana State Director Marty Ott added, "This is a big state, and the public lands issues in western Montana can be vastly different than those in the eastern part of the state. Having three councils in Montana based on geographic areas helps us stay more in tune with local issues."

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New and reappointed members and the groups they represent are:

Western Montana Resource Advisory Council

Sue Marxer, federal grazing (reappointment)
 Rob McCulloch, energy/minerals (reappointment)
 Donna Tate McDonald, commercial recreation (reappointment)
 Richard Young, environmental (reappointment)
 Dan Lucas, public-at-large (new)

Central Montana Resource Advisory Council

Glenn Terry, commercial recreation (reappointment)
 Lisa Cowan, federal grazing (new)
 Mary Ellen Fay, environmental (new)
 Jeff Sheldon, historic interest (new)
 Randall Gray, elected official (reappointment)
 Dean Stiffarm, Sr., Native American tribes (new)

Eastern Montana Resource Advisory Council

Colby Branch, energy/minerals (new)
 Charles Hauptman, energy/minerals (new)
 Robert Lubbers, environmental (reappointment)
 Howard Boggess, historic interests (new)
 John Gibson, environmental (new)
 Mack Cole, elected official (new)

The BLM, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages more land—262 million surface acres—than any other federal agency. Most of the country's BLM-managed public land is located in 12 western states, including Alaska. The bureau, which has a budget of \$1.8 billion and a workforce of 10,000 employees, also administers 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's "multiple use" mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM accomplishes this by managing for such resources as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, and energy and mineral development that helps meet the nation's energy needs, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on the public lands.

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